

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER



Volume XXI, Number 5, October 1970

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Our purpose: To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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A PRAYER FOR UNIVERSAL GOOD

We pray that the Spirit of Divine Love and Brotherhood may enter the hearts of the people of every country of the earth; that God, as a Spiritual Power, will awaken every soul to the value of spiritual things, and the value of creative effort without competition, greed, fear or jealousy of any other person or nation.

May every person on earth be filled now with a spiritual zeal and unswerving purpose to spend his time and resources for constructive work in the world, to bring about universal peace and brotherhood. Thus, shall Divine Love be established and God's Kingdom reign on earth.

(Courtesy of Juliet Crist)

EDITORIAL

The world, as I write this editorial, is in turmoil about the hijacking of four airplanes by Palestinian guerrillas (or "terrorists," if you prefer that word), and we hang in the balance about the resolve of five countries to weigh *nationalistic*, and Western, morality and ethics and "justice" against the many lives held for ransom and blackmail.

It may seem to beg the question to suggest that some good can come out of this tragedy. (I do not mean the posting of armed "security forces" aboard international airlines, which is surely in the offing.)

A 13-year-old girl from Washington, D. C., asked about the experience in an Amman interview, said: "I think I grew up a little." (This was on the basis of her having had, previously, a "pretty soft life.") Wouldn't you?

An artist friend of mine, recently returned from a 10,000-mile tour of Eastern Europe, said: "I never would have imagined all we take *for granted*."

We do. And if there's a moral here, it's this: *Count your blessings*. (It's too bad it sounds like a cliché.)

Once upon a time, people went out to tame a frontier. (Yes, some of them were twisted, neurotic, psychotic; most were decent folk.) They did. They met challenges, obstacles, problems; but that was part of life. And they accepted them as part of "the game." Nowadays, most challenges are gone. No cutting of diamonds with diamonds. It's hard to cut anything with money, ex-

cept ease, leisure, desuetude. We don't even flex our muscles anymore—a machine does it for us.

Our opportunities for growing up have become more and more limited. Which is probably why we have multiplied the number of "adolescents" on the loose. And adolescent behavior is rampant among us, reaching right up to high places.

Tragedies—and let us regard the hijacking as a conspicuous example—*can* serve as a new kind of frontier. But that can happen only to those who, like the 13-year-old girl, are open-minded, responsive, and humanistic. Tragedies-in-the-making are something else again. We create them; we abet them; we, in some curious perverted way, welcome them. Just to have a challenge. (Just to be humanly inhuman?)

Suppose we challenge the challenge? Put the innate peace of which we are all capable to work?

Cannot, then, anything in the world be hijacked but the soul?

— J. W.

LONELINESS

Sue LaVerne Christian

Lonelier than a tree that stands alone

Or a bird without a song

Or a child without hope

Or a people without prayer

These things tell of a loneliness deep within.

EXPERIENCES OF PRAYER

In response to the Fellowship's call for volunteers, fifty-some individuals in the USA and Canada have been praying and keeping detailed records of their prayers since June 1. The purpose of the call was to obtain a fund of the most personal accounts of prayer experiences that can be read and used by others in their own spiritual adventures. The following two extracts have been signed "A" and "B" to protect the privacy of their authors. Otherwise, they have not been edited. More personal records will be published in future issues.

A's EXPERIENCES

June, 1970

Prayer Plan: Healings, through spiritual prayer alone.

I was residing in a Retirement Home, with thirty-five women. As I had been a widow, and living alone, for twenty-five years, this situation of seeing some of these residents half blind, some of them almost totally deaf, most of them talking of their diseases, their doctors and medicines, while we were eating our meals, daily, I found I was unconsciously accepting these errors as real. Before long, I noticed a lump on my eyelid. Although it was not noticed by anyone, I felt I must pray to remove this form of error. I had used the Bible truth, "Whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it. . ." (Ecc. 3:14), to remove small growths,

several times, so I used it this time. I looked within my consciousness, recognized the error of believing real these material manifestations on the other women; and reversed my belief, with the truth that whatever God made was good; his man was made perfect, and had not changed. I had the understanding that God is Truth, Love; that man is like God, the image of Truth, Love; so I knew man could not image anything God did not have. In a few days the little round ball of flesh fell off my eyelid.

I continued to watch my thought—not to accept, as real, any evidence of the material senses. However, because of the unkindness of the dietitian, I let myself get upset several times. A small pimple came on my cheek—I squeezed it, thinking it was a blackhead. The “blackhead” did not come out, but became sore and puffed. I seemed to not know what produced this type of error, so did nothing in particular, to remove it. However, I did daily study of spiritual truths. I do not know what truth dried it up; but I do know that I had recognized that the reason I was in this Home, was to learn meekness. I had prayed for several years, for growth in grace, expressed in patience, meekness, love and good deeds. I had overcome impatience to a large extent; had learned to love in a wider way; and had seen ways of helping my fellowman; but meekness seemed to evade me. Now, instead of resenting what this person in the kitchen said or did, which I thought was unfair and unkind, I held my peace. Before I left there, the little “blackhead” had begun to dry up. It receded in proportion as the error of my thought receded. The scab came off, and today, a month later, there is only a small red spot evident, which, I am sure, will fade out completely, when the memory of the circumstances fades out completely .

. . . One more healing came to me, while in the Retirement Home. I had been troubled with “chest pains” and a gathering in my throat, before going to this Retirement Home, but I had not been able to see what was producing this condition. I would have to

leave the table, sometimes before I took a bite of food, and clear my throat, before I could swallow food. A certain woman was placed at the table by me, who watched what I ate, and would remark about my size, and about the sweets I ate, until I began to see that *resistance* was producing my trouble! After some weeks, she was moved to another table; and I noticed I could swallow food better. It eventually became clear to me, that resistance was causing my trouble—but *how* to keep from resisting! I studied, asking Divine Mind to tell me what I needed. A book, "Who's the Matter With Me" had come into my hands a short time before this; and I began to see how ridiculous it was for me to let others influence me in this way. Of course, I had known a long time before, that it is our own *reaction*, to the wrongs of others, which adds to our pains. All we can do is pray—to acknowledge that they, too, are sons of God. It is easier, by far, to change our concept of others, than it is to change them. I knew the truth about myself, also—that man is not a "glutton" because God is not a glutton! The chest pains, and the gathering in the throat are a thing of the past. It is good to remember that there are no human emotions in God, the divine Mind; nor, in man, the image and likeness of God. Man has no mind other than this one divine Mind. That is the truth that frees us from the wiles of the devil.

B's EXPERIENCES

Started June 1, 1970 (5:30 A.M.)

Previously decided that to me—World Peace was my special concern. How to overcome wars—I don't know but I thought love—of fellow men would be a start. Certainly to me—love of God should be there but for all the peoples of the world,—I can't speak.

In my first prayer sessions I picked out specific war areas (Vietnam, Middle East). I asked God's help in turning people from

war, killings, massacres, suffering, hate—to peace—peace with one another and with God, and love of one another and love of God.

(First sessions were troubled because of a personal problem.)

By the end of the first week I was partially visualizing the slaughters in concentration camps, Vietnam, Andersonville—then I tried to imagine love and peace. Results were poor.

My failure caused me to plan for the next week. I decided to think of the same bleak things turning to brightness—then to tolerance, trust, love and peace.

This week was marked by improvement in visualizing but somehow was discouraged. I found myself thinking of the war problem many times during the day. Decided to read from two angles—War and Peace (Love).

Week 3 JOINED MY WIFE IN FLORIDA FOR 10 DAYS

Discussed the FIP special program with my wife. Most interested. Somehow I got on a new track. If peoples (and nations) will accept God's love, then

War can change to Peace

Killing can change to Life-living

Suffering can change to Health

Hate can change to Love.

Prayers for these peoples to find and accept God's love—this made my thoughts brighter, and in some sessions I could feel peaceful but this was my only response. Prayer is coming much easier.

4th Week

Continued reading program. Used same general prayers as during third week. Noticed one small item—Early morning pray-

ers seem to bring me a greater sense of closeness than evening prayer. Somehow I feel it—but I really don't know what I expect.

5th Week To 7th Week

No change in program. I am spending more time visualizing both sides; the bad—wars, killing, hate, darkness vs. peace, joy of living, love, light (brightness). Some sessions are very good and leave me feeling quiet and calm. Others seem to fail. These are upsetting. What is wrong?

IF F.I.P. CAN STRAIGHTEN ME OUT, I WILL MAKE A FRESH START OTHERWISE I'LL CONTINUE TO TRY FOR IMPROVEMENT.

FEAR NOT

Winifred Hamrick Farrar

Fear not:
this day
in the city of David,
Bethlehem,

a rose
is blooming
from Jesse's stem;

and the keeper
of Israel
does not slumber
or sleep . . .

how else
could He watch
us weep?

and how else
the city keep?

MY BOOKS

William Walter De Bolt

My books look out evenly from their shelves
like eyes balanced in a face.

They have been taught to be compulsive
in a kingdom governed by order,
and not to answer when you ask
why this never happened in my life.

INTELLIGENCE

Gloria A. Martin

Heart,
wealthy
with wisdom,
nothing can rob
you!

MEDITATION BASED ON PSALM 64

Samuel M. Silver

Was it Einstein who said he didn't know how World War III would be waged, but he was sure that World War IV would be fought with bows and arrows?

No one was more shocked by the possibilities of atomic warfare than the gentle physicist, Albert Einstein, who unlocked the secret of atomic energy. So, too, the Wright Brothers were scandalized by the military uses to which their invention, the airplane, was put. In the Bible the writer of Psalm 64 also refers to bows and arrows, but in an altogether different context. The Psalmist says that he is worried by his enemies: They are ruthless and they are workers of iniquity. And the malicious people sharpen their tongues like arrows and hurl insults at those they don't like. The Psalmist compares the verbal barbs to the effects of bows and arrows. Then the Psalmist expresses the hope that God will offset that kind of wickedness by hurling at the slanderers another form of bow and arrow: His spirit of kindness.

The imagery throughout Psalm 64, which is worth your re-discovery, is, then, in terms of bows and arrows. Just as the projectile of insult is tossed at the innocent by the vicious, so the Psalmist prays that the bow and arrow of God's gentleness will find its target in the heart of those who delight in evil, and thus change them.

Interestingly enough, the word "Torah," which is Hebrew for "wisdom and learning," derives from the root, "to shoot an arrow." The teacher aims Torah—that is, instruction—at the mind of the pupil. Here is another example of the Hebrew hope that implements of force will be converted to instruments of harmony. Let swords be transformed into plowshares, pleads the prophet. Let the dicta of humanitarianism be propelled at all people and what will be the result?

The Psalmist tells us in the last lines of Psalm 64: "The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall take refuge in Him."

DO UNTO OTHERS

Marion J. Richardson

To repeat the words:
 "Do unto others
 as you would have them
 do unto you"
 is not enough —
 we must practice this wisdom:
 love as He loved,
 not only in our own
 little, narrow circle,
 but form an unbroken love chain
 around the world —
 showing compassion
 for everyone.
 Then and only then
 will there be peace
 with no more wars.

SEABORN

I am the Eternal, the unbounded. I sing through chords the one Universal Symphony of Truth. Truth is the harmony of myriad melodies, all echoing the infinite chorale of Life. As the swell of the tide ebbs and flows, the Everlasting Force generates power and volume. Surface currents eddy and repercuss causing crest and foam. Like man's restlessness in mart and home. Through changing circumstance and quiver of expanse.

I am with you in everflowing healing. Water is the basic equation of life. Soothing replenishment for parched lips, cupped in the hollow of hands. Swift challenge of eager arms that glide and sweep, cutting wave and spray; or which float with the ripple and swell of river and stream. You will find me in the rapid's plunge and swirl. . . in the creak and gurgle of thaw. . . in the vibrance and gush of geyser and spring. . . in the splash of fish in secluded pool and pond. I am the halo of rainbow caught in the waterfall. . . and the lyric trickle of freshet.

Enwrapped within me, is all Energy. . . all Light . . . all Color. . . and the substance of Sound and Time. The miracle of Dew. . the mystery of Fog. . the mirage of Mist. . the pageantry of Clouds. The redemption of Torrent. . the balm of Snow. . the electricity of Frost. . and the reincarnation of Ocean.

Embrace me. . I am yours.

EARTHBORN

I am the Universal, the Infinite. I speak in many tongues the one profound truth. Truth is a crystal of many facets, all reflecting the Infinite Spectrum of Light. As man is built, in the divine image of God, so the pure white Light, of dynamic electricity, shimmers through and permeates every living organism.

I am with you. . . man. . . in ever present Presence. I am the essence of all, if you will but become aware. . . and absorb me. Cannot you hear me as I speak, like the echo of an old friend's voice, lost for a space of time? Do you not feel the remembrance within your inner ear?

I am the refreshment in the Rain. . . the warmth in the Fire. . . the radiation of the Sunlight. . . the vibrance in the Snow. I am the compassion of Water's felicity. I am the awakening breath of Life, felt as the surface of the Earth cracks in early Springtime.

I am the visual prism of the flowering of Summer-time. I am the glimpse of the Unseen, veiled in the beauty of Autumnal mists. I am the consciousness of Eternity, sensed in the benediction of Sleep, that sacred interval embracing Time and Space.

Take me, . . . I am yours.

— *Erica May Brooks*

NEW BIRTH

Mildred Long

Each day is a new birth. Each morning the sun rises in freshness and hope. Clouds of yesterday are gone. The sun does not look back or carry remembrance of the past. Its only obligation is to shine, to give light to the hours of the day, to move across the sky in its appointed course.

Let my soul accept each day as the sun accepts its function: marching face-forward toward the goal, forgetting yesterday, remembering no clouds or storms, rising unhampered from the night's rest to pursue the course of life—ever-lighted from above and ahead, ever-vibrant with eternal promise.

Thus, each day shall be a new birth.



No prayer is ever unheard. Our answer comes in the way most suited to our need. Our prayers are answered, not by making changes, but by revealing what is.

— *Genevieve Burnell Robinson*

THE TWINKLE IN GOD'S EYE

Alice Richmond

The twinkle in God's eye
Helps you and me to live,
To understand the good —
Reflected kindness heals
deep-bruised inward pain.

The twinkle of God's eye
Gives Faith a knowing push
Beholds our brother's need
When coming nearer, close:
mercy unveiled beams.

Sweet magic smile uplifts
A cheerfilled gracious look
Soft folding prayed hands
His searching world shares ONE:
inspires loving Christ.

A twinkle-sparked Beginning
ALL in the world unites —
Dawn-tenderness births Hope
While comfort streams to light
His grown children's hearts!

DOES SYMPATHY HELP?

How many people are over-sympathetic! How destructive that is to you! Don't crave sympathy. Look upon the one who sympathizes with you as your worst enemy. I am going to prove it to you: You have a headache, and one of your sympathetic friends comes in and says, "What is the matter, dear?"

You say, "Oh, my head!"

"I feel sorry for you. Let me rub your head and put some cold cloths on it." And how you love it, don't you! But it makes your head feel that much worse.

That sympathetic friend leaves, and a "good fellow" comes in and says, "What's the matter with you?"

"Oh, my head," you say.

"Forget about it," he says. "Listen, did you hear the latest?" And he keeps on getting you interested and getting your thoughts in a different channel, tells you a few jokes, and in a short time you are laughing, and enjoying yourself, and have forgotten your headache. I am giving you that example because you know it is true; it has happened to you.

And in life there should be no sentiment, no one catering to you and pitying you. That is not constructive for you. Give people the means to help themselves, yes—but without pity or feelings. The greater love has no sentiment, but it is willing to do anything that is for the good of the one that is loved. That is the constructive love.

Learn to scatter smiles and sunshine around you, give good thoughts, kind words, constructive words to those who come in contact with you, never complaining about your own tragedies and ills, but instead cheering those who are with you. It will all come back in reflection upon you, which will mean happiness and peace.

—from "Life Is As You Give It" by Louis Conde'- Lahissa

LORD
 give me
 strength to love—
 hate has made me
 weak.

—*Jaye Giammarino*

GOD IS

F. Bernadette Turner

I watch from my window the passing of night
 My wandering thoughts take flight;
 From the depths of my being
 Somehow I know—
 God is.

WE THANK THEE, LORD

Helen G. Jefferson

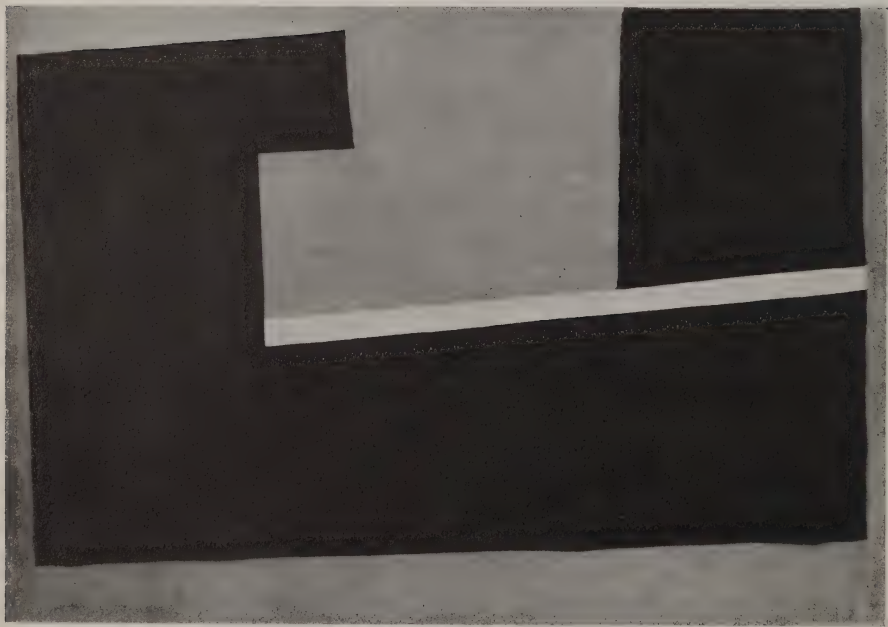
We thank Thee, Lord, for flowering tree,
 For faith that sees within the bud
 A promise of the fruit to be,
 A prophecy

MOMENT OF TRUTH

Emily Sargent Councilman

Young soldier,
holding that swaddled baby
found among bodies of "enemy" dead,
your body yearns toward the child.
Rejecting pushed-back helmet,
shoulder-hung rifle,
your arms curve,
protecting the child.

With eyes looking down
at violated helplessness alive,



COMPOSITION 1965 / Merlyn Evans

the man repents war savagery,
accepts, at awful cost,
his humanhood.

How dare we
send you back and back
to kill,
bearing, in your body now,
your knowledged guilt,
our shame?

DOOR

Marian Lord

It's all been said before:
the open door,
the knock,
the answer:

IF

Florence B. Unangst

If all who eagerly cry "Peace"
Would live it instead of preach,
Utopian life would no longer be
A jewel beyond reach.

THE IDEA OF SALVATION ACCORDING TO RĀMANUJACHARYA

Swami Ritajananda

(This is the fifth of a five-part series on salvation according to various religious doctrines as presented in conference at the Ramakrishna Vedanta Center, Gretz, France.)

Translated from the French by Narcissa G. Chamberlain

With Samkarāchārya*, Madhvacharya, and other thinkers, Rāmanujacharya figures among the great commentators of Vedanta. Born in 1017, of a Brahman family of the south of India, he lived until 1127. After having studied the sacred texts, the Vedas, and the Vedanta, under a master who followed strictly the Vedanta of Samkarāchārya, he had frequent discussions with him, not being entirely satisfied with the arguments of his master. Finally he left him.

After going through innumerable difficulties, Rāmanuja became attached to Yamanucharya. Perhaps he never even met him. But he pronounced monastic vows and established himself at Srirangam.

Rāmanujacharya founded centers which taught his system of Vedanta called Vishishta-Advaīta or mitigated Non-Dualism.

* See article, FIP, August 1969.

In India, for several centuries, there had already existed a well established school of Bhakti—way of devotion. The writings of the Vaishnavas taught, and still teach, this way of Bhakti, in which great saints lived entirely absorbed in devotion and realized a great happiness. The devout love to follow this direct way of love of the Lord; they are happy to meditate, to sing, and to serve God. In this way they composed four thousand verses, still sung in our day in the temples of Vishnu.

Bhakti is inspired moreover by the Bhagavata, a text established after the teaching of Sri Krishna. The tradition of Bhakti dates from long centuries and includes saints greatly venerated by the people.

The importance of the philosophical system of Rāmanujacharya is the fact of uniting theism with the philosophy of the Absolute. These two systems, theism and the philosophy of the Absolute, are very ancient. But to have united them in the system of Vishishtā-Advaita constituted a real attraction for the erudite and for the simple people. One found there even a sort of resemblance to the Bhagavad-Gītā.

This system is a good presentation of philosophy and of religion. It suits pious men and those who are less so. What is the basis of Vishishtā-Advaita?

According to this philosophy, three elements are essential: 1) God or *Īśvara*, 2) souls, 3) matter. The two elements, souls and matter, cannot exist independently; and without *Īśvara* there are neither souls nor matter. We shall take the example of the soul and the human body. The soul lives in the body; the soul controls it and utilizes it for her own ends. Thus, matter and souls form a body of which God is the Soul; *Īśvara* has total control of souls and matter.

The name Vishishtā-Advaita signifies, according to Rāmanujacharya, the complex totality described as Unity—Advaita. BRAHMAN is the Absolute. BRAHMAN is Íśvara. And Íśvara is substance; creation is his attribute. Both are real, because both are One.

If we wish to explain it better, we may say that this system is the Non-Dualism of the differentiated, unconscious matter and conscious souls being in Íśvara. Thus, BRAHMAN is Íśvara with his infinite and excellent attributes. There is nothing beside Him. We see, then, that the system of Rāmanujacharya is a philosophy of religion which teaches how BRAHMAN is the basis of our existence and how He is our salvation.

BRAHMAN is the Reality of the universe, but this Reality is not without attributes, as the Advaita-Vedanta of Samkarāchārya had said; on the contrary, it is a Reality with infinite and excellent attributes.

The world changes constantly, but this changing is not without rules: It is controlled by divine rules. Changes are favorable to the development of souls; they help them to attain to salvation with moral progress and perfection.

Jiva, the soul, is conditioned by its *karma*. There is here an immense variety of experiences of good and evil. Spiritually speaking, the soul is eternal; but it goes through different experiences only in its consciousness of the ordinary world.

Moksa, liberation, is only possible for the soul which recovers the profound knowledge of its religious consciousness as manifestation of the Lord. The world is, then, a series of experiences for liberating souls.

BRAHMAN is always pure and perfect. BRAHMAN realizes His true nature in entering into matter as souls for the creation of the world, with name and form, becoming the BRAHMAN—SELF.

In our soul, BRAHMAN exists as the inner Director, Antaryamin, never contaminated by the impurities of the exterior world, nor by the imperfections of the soul. Liberation is thus a quest for realizing BRAHMAN with attributes.

The Absolute is Bhagavan, the Lord.

Let us understand that BRAHMAN is the Absolute of philosophy and God of religion. BRAHMAN becomes the universe to facilitate the liberation of souls. Then the souls, which come from God, enter into God. Souls are seeds sown in matter; seeds produce fruit; the fruit is salvation.

The world exists entirely in the Lord. On one side, the soul is a ray of the Light of BRAHMAN and also his attribute. On the other, it is upheld by BRAHMAN who is the supreme Atman of the Jiva (soul).

The more we study the Vedanta of Rāmanujacharya, the more we discover the large place reserved for religion. In remembering the Advaita-Vedanta of Samkarāchārya, we can understand why men, strongly drawn by religious sentiments, could think that Samkarāchārya was an atheist, because he said that God is an illusion. Whereas Rāmanujacharya admits God with all His attributes. He is the source of all our qualities.

In fact, the search for salvation does not worry Rāmanujacharya. For him, the only end to attain is the realization of the Ultimate Truth. The soul is tired by its different lives which have brought it experiences of inferior and transitory values; it seeks to go to the Lord.

Bhakti-Yoga is very popular in India; it is considered the most important Yoga; it is the way in which the seeker of Moksa, liberation, abandons the egocentric life and all egoism in order to be attached to the one will of the supreme Lord. He longs to arrive at communion with God. According to Rāmanujacharya, it is the most direct road to perfection.

All philosophic systems are unanimous on the interpretation of the word Moksa; it is liberation, the deliverance from *Samsara*. The only difference which characterizes the different schools is the choice of the road to follow. For Rāmanujacharya, the Karma and Jnana Yogas are useful disciplines, but the supreme way is Bhakti. He has presented, relying on the scriptures, the positive aspect of spiritual search. According to him, salvation does not consist alone in deliverance and the disappearance of ignorance, but in an eternal life with the Lord, enjoying divine beatitude.

There results from this conception, that the spiritual aspirant has the purpose of arriving at Paramapada, the supreme abode. When the aspirant attains this, he can have an integral experience of the Absolute and he realizes eternal beatitude.

Salvation is not possible without the grace of the Lord. When a man has a very great devotion and abandons himself to God, his spiritual thirst increases.

The individual Soul, born into this world because of its karma—results of its former actions, because of karma; its desires, because of Avidya; its ignorance, and also by causality—can discover that the Atman belongs to BRAHMAN. We do not know for what cause the soul does not know this. It is disconcerting. It is an incomprehensible thing.

Then, the soul identifies itself with ignorance and uncon-

sciousness. Plunged in ignorance, it has desire for all sense objects and transitory pleasures. In so acting, the individual soul produces its own karma in the Samsara of the life of the world.

The world is always changing, conditioned by time, space, and causality. BRAHMAN is always free of any conditions, that is to say, without Avidya, or karma, or kama, without space, without time. BRAHMAN is beyond our intellectual comprehension. He is transcendental, infinite.

The soul can only attain deliverance by shattering the chains of Avidya, of karma, and kama, of space and time. Our physical body and our mind are the product of *Prakriti*; they act only as much as the different divinities called Agni, Vayu, Surya and the moon govern, respectively, speech, smell, vision, and the mind. One of the parts of a man is of the world; another is of heaven. Salvation for him is possible only in liberating what he calls his soul from all limitations. When a man becomes conscious of the Divine Presence, which is constantly within himself, he attains inspiration, and he will always have the hope of being in spiritual union with the Bhagavan—the Lord. This man will have an eternal spiritual life.

The world, created by the Lord, is a favorable ambience for the development of souls; they may attain there the realization of God. According to Rāmanujacharya, one realizes BRAHMAN partially in the terrestrial world, but one realizes Him totally in the superior world, Heaven.

After having left the gross body, the soul departs, with the subtile body, in the way of the *Devas*. The Bhagavad-Gītā names the two eternal ways of the world—that of the light and that of shadows:

“The one who follows the way of Light comes back no more. The one who follows the other returns.”

The road of the Devas is luminous. The Devas welcome warmly the one who has vanquished, in himself, material and worldly tendencies, the one who has transcended them. The soul passes, one after the other, the seven worlds more and more elevated; it abandons the vestment worn by the Prakriti and freed from all the differentiations it had imagined. It enjoys eternal Beatitude.

The idea of salvation, according to Rāmanujacharya, is progressive ascension to the Brahma-Loka—Heaven of Brahma, for Rāmanujacharya does not accept the idea of an immediate liberation in a human body, in this world. (For him, there does not exist the possibility of the Living-Liberated one, an idea defended by Samkarāchārya.) Salvation for him consists in the entrance into Paramapada or Vaikuntha—abode of Vishnu—a region filled with light, above the human comprehension of time and, though we speak of light, of perfumes, of forms, all of this corresponds in no way to a comparison with the things of this earthly world. The Vaikuntha is the abode of supreme Beatitude. BRAHMAN, with His infinite beauty, is imagined on a throne that has never been seen by human eyes.

Salvation is thus conceived under four progressive aspects:

1) *Salokya salvation*, the soul arrived at the Vaikuntha rejoices at being in the world of the Lord.

2) *Samipya salvation*, the soul arrived at the Vaikuntha rejoices at being near the Lord.

3) *Sarupya salvation*, the soul arrived at the Vaikuntha rejoices in having a form like that of the Lord.

4) *Sayujya salvation*, the soul arrived at the Vaikuntha rejoices in communion with the Lord.

* * *

Rāmanujacharya, in his conception of salvation, does not accept the identity ATMAN-BRAHMAN, taught by Samkarāchārya.

Rāmanujacharya affirms that the soul is liberated as soon as it destroys all its limitations. But for him, this does not imply the identity ATMAN-BRAHMAN; the soul always keeps its form and individuality. Thus, the soul who attains the highest level of salvation remains always separate from the Lord, even in discovering that it is of identical nature; it will always have to venerate Him and adore Him.

The soul that attains salvation becomes omniscient; it is constantly conscious of the Presence of the Lord; it desires nothing more, and it will never go back again to the world of Samsara, that is to say, this earth. In this world, the soul experiences neither the Supreme Intelligence nor Wisdom, nor Beatitude, because it sees them obscured by Avidya—ignorance—and by karma. On the contrary, when the soul destroys its ignorance and its karma, it manifests two qualities: Wisdom and Beatitude.

In the state of salvation, there exists no more distinction between souls, whether it be those of the Devas, other beings, animals, plants, of all creatures. The distinction exists at the level of the earthly world, because there we have a relation with matter, cause of distinctions.

In the state of liberation, the soul possesses all except two qualities of the Lord. BRAHMAN is everywhere, whereas the soul will always remain limited. BRAHMAN is omnipresent; nevertheless, the soul may enter into various worlds, created by the Lord by taking a different body; but the soul has no power over the creation. This power belongs solely to BRAHMAN.

Souls arrived at salvation are composed of pure *Sattva*; meanwhile, they express their thoughts and their different desires. Thus, there are two types of liberated ones:

—The type of free, active ones who wish to serve the Lord in the world.

—The type of free passive ones who think only of the true nature of the Lord and meditate upon this.

The way of salvation:

Bhakti is the path preferred by Ramanujacharya. But salvation can be attained by another way. In order to manifest Bhakti, we must concentrate on the idea that "The Lord is the Soul of our soul," in its depths, and that we are the "modes" of His substance. This subtile knowledge is difficult to attain because of our bad karma. In order to put aside and destroy this bad karma, we must work. This is, then, the way of "disinterested action." We reach it by offering all the fruits of our actions to the Lord. Thus, Rāmanujacharya says that the way of karma and that of Jnana are aids for arriving at Bhakti, for uprooting egoism in ourselves, for increasing the power of our will, and attaining a new dimension of knowledge.

Bhakti is the best means of finding the Lord by meditation. But it is very difficult to have a true Bhakti; in consequence, great preparation and constant spiritual practice are necessary. Here are the essential disciplines:

1) *Viveka* or discrimination, typical discipline, with pure nourishment.

2) *Vimoksha* or the abandonment of all desires except that of the Lord.

3) *Abhyāsa* or constant thought of the Lord.

4) *Kriyā* or study and adoration of God, with accomplish-

ment of duties toward ancestors, human society, and animals.

5) *Kalyāna* or thinking of the good of all with entire veracity, compassion, non-violence, charity, giving, contentment, and hope.

We understand clearly that Bhakti is not only a form that we could qualify as emotional, it is also a very great interior effort, within ourselves. This effort demands of us the persevering development of our reason, of our will, of our devotion. Bhakti is knowledge of the Divine, at the same time as abandonment to the divine will, called Prapatti. It is the way followed by all the great devout ones. Numerous of the faithful of Vishnuism say that Prapatti is enough and that there is no need for any other spiritual discipline.

Rāmanujacharya thinks that love of the Lord and the gift of oneself to God is an easy way to follow, open to everyone without distinction of age, caste, or condition of life. Even a priest would not know how to help us more; a cult or a sacred writing could not guide us better, for the grace of the Lord can be controlled by no one.

Rāmanujacharya speaks of the Lord Vishnu and of His Shakti Lakshmi, the Divine Mother who intercedes for all sinners with all Her love.

God is infinite, a spiritual Principle and a Person, according to Rāmanujacharya. Religious experience demands that we have a God.

If Rāmanujacharya did not accept the idea of BRAHMAN without attributes, it is because, without attributes, we could not know Him either by perception, or by inference, or by the sacred writings. If all perceptions are unreal, the sacred writings are also, and they cannot speak to us of Reality.

If we call Reality "God," we see there a limitation. The words "Sat-Unit-Amānda"—existence, knowledge, beatitude—give a personality to BRAHMAN and also a character. God is BRAHMAN! God can know directly. He is the Supreme Person. Whereas, souls are individual persons, always imperfect.

God is perfect, powerful, omniscient, full of mercy. The world is the creation of God through Love. He has organized the creation, and He helps those who seek salvation. God is eternally linked with the world; this is natural.

God has a particular form which does not depend upon Prakṛiti nature or karma, as is the case with us. It is not necessary for God to have a physical body. The body is made of a substance, whatever it may be. The body is controlled completely by a soul which can utilize it for its own ends.

The Lord does not suffer as we do. He would not suffer even if He had a body because he is without karma, the source of suffering.

Before ending this study on salvation according to the two great systems of thought in India, the Advaita-Vedānta of Saṃkarāchārya and the Viśiṣṭa-Advaita of Rāmanujacharya, I will assemble some particular points.

According to the thought of India, salvation is always deliverance from earthly life, from the life which is repeated in this world of suffering. Deliverance is possible only by attaining to the Lord.

There are four forms of Reality in the Hindu tradition of which we have spoken briefly:

1) *BRAHMAN, the Absolute*. Sāṃkaracharya says the realization of BRAHMAN is the end (objective) of our life.

2) *God or Iśvara*.

3) *The soul of the world with Iśvara*.

4) *The world in which the soul communes with the Lord*.

Men who accept the third and fourth forms—the soul of the world with Iśvara and the world in which the soul communes with the Lord—these work for the amelioration of the world.

Samkarāchārya speaks of the first form and tells us that in attaining salvation, that is to say, the realization of BRAHMAN, the Absolute, we shall have a new vision, a new power of vision and an “intuition” by which we shall realize union with the ABSOLUTE-BRAHMAN. All our imperfections will be removed as well as our ignorance.

Rāmanujacharya, with the second form, God or Iśvara, says that the individual soul keeps its distinct individuality and the freedom to act as it wishes, but its will is not its own—it is the will of the Lord.

A similar idea is expressed by another philosopher, Madhvacharya, only, for him, it is not a matter of a life in contact with God, but a life in heaven with God.

All the philosophers agree in affirming that the soul must arrive at the state of purity and perfection.

Sages of a third type say that life should be devoted to the amelioration of the life of beings. Later, the idea is expressed that salvation should be considered, not as an individual liberation but as the liberation of all. Many philosophers think in this way. Up to the moment of liberation one should, then, live in order to help others. According to this conception, the soul

which has attained perfection is freed from all desires and all egoistic thoughts; this soul will be dedicated entirely to the welfare of others.

With the idea of salvation, one still keeps the idea of one's own spiritual liberty. When a soul attains to the Lord, it has no more worldly desire. Liberated souls seek only to unite their will to that of the Lord for the good of the world.

Om!
 Lead us from the unreal to the Real
 From the shadows to the Light
 From death to Immortality
 Peace! Peace! Peace!

ODE TO MY MOTHER

Marion H. Freeman

I needed no
 Mother of Christ
 to intercede

Still if you had
 denied me cast me
 from you without love

I held your tender
 love and warmth
 within my heart

Mother of God
 you might have been
 my dear love this day

A LITTLE BIRD'S PLEA

Georgia Palmer Dishner

Dear Lord . . . I'm just a little bird
And do not know how to pray . . .
But in the Written Word
It does plainly say
You care for little creatures . . .
So . . . will You please . . .
Look over my homely features
And hear words like these
Make the dew plentiful on flowers . . .
Plenty of places to rest . . .
When you send heavy showers
Please protect my nest . . .
It shelters my little ones;
Scatter an abundance of seeds
That I may live through many suns;
Look after my daily needs . . .
Let my heart sing . . . sing . . .
Melodies to the skies
Until it is time to wing
To some secret Paradise.

NOTICES AND COMMENTS

PRAYER PAMPHLET PUBLISHED. During September each member was sent—free of charge—one copy of FIP's newly-published pamphlet entitled *Prayer*. If you did not receive your copy, or if you want to order additional copies, you can do so by writing to the Executive Director, Fellowship in Prayer, Room 1122, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010. Please enclose fifty cents to cover handling and postage of each additional copy.

KATHRYN G. BROWN RECOVERING. Executive Secretary Kathryn G. Brown entered a hospital this summer for minor surgery. During pre-operative examination, she was found to be suffering a serious heart ailment. Major heart-surgery was recommended by her doctors. She underwent the operation, which was successful. After many weeks of recuperation at her family's home in Spring Valley, New York, she is looking forward to resuming her duties as soon as possible. She has been cheered by cards and letters from countless friends and helped immeasurably by all their prayers in her behalf.

DEATHS OF TWO PATRONS. It is with sorrow that Fellowship in Prayer notes the passing of two famous men who generously served the Fellowship as Patrons: Dr. Frank C. Laubach and the Reverend Ralph G. Sockman. Their accomplishments are too well known to require recital here. The world—and the Fellowship—will be spiritually and intellectually poorer as a result of their deaths.



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1 PETER 5: 7

Kelly Janes

Worry is despair
Of Heaven's care,
Worse than doubt,
A substitute
For work, for prayer.

LOVE

Betty Miller Daly

Love flies
 through obstacles
 with ease
As birds
 through shadows
 cast
 by trees

“For a world united in prayer”

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